

## The Ukrainian Language

197 Ukrainian belongs to the Slavonic branch of the family of Indogermanic languages and this branch again divides into South Slav, West Slav and East Slav. Ukrainian, with Russian and White Ruthenian, forms the East Slav group which is an intermediary among Slavonic languages. Morphologically Ukrainian is like Russian, phonetically it approaches Serbo-Croatian and, as far as meaning goes, it has much in common with Polish. The north-west area of Ukrainian lies in the region of the home of Slavonic languages.

- 195 The development of Ukrainian as an independent language dates from the 9th century. Up to the end of the 18th century, old Church Slavonic, which had come with Christianity mainly from Bulgaria, served as the language of literature. With Ukrainian additions this has remained the language of the church up till the present. It is also the vehicle for historical chronicles (the Nestor Chronicle, the Chronicle of Galicia and Volynia) and the Igor Song, the greatest epic of the 12th century. Most of the literary monuments of those days, however, were destroyed in the wars against the Asiatic hordes. And yet the importance of old Church Slavonic as used in Ukraine spread far beyond the frontiers of the country; it became the court language of the Grand Princes of Lithuania and the official language in Moldavia. Literary activity increased in Ukraine in the 17th century but the subjects treated were taken from religion and so Church Slavonic continued to be the vehicle of literary expression. Historical works in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Cossack Chronicles by Velychko, Samovydet and the "History of the Ruthenes" (Istoriia Rusow) are written in Church Slavonic with popular Ukrainian and Polish additions and many foreign words. At the same time individual writers are already writing in the national language, for example Nekrashevych, Gavatovych, partly also Skovoroda, while "Dumy", folksongs and anonymous verses are also written in Ukrainian.
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About the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries Ukrainian finally managed to establish itself, for which Kotlarevskyj's travesty of the Aeneid (1798) was originally responsible. Literature becomes a national concern (cf. Kvitka-Osnovjanyenko, Met-

874 for party schools, for workmen's clubs and centers of adult education in the country.

871 In the course of years this basic scheme underwent many changes till it was adapted to the general Soviet scheme in 1932; by a resolution passed by the Central Executive of the Communist Party on August 25 of that year the 7-year elementary school in Ukraine was transformed into a 10-year school, a third section being added, and the technical schools which had not yet become institutes were put on the same level as the higher schools; new universities had to be founded in order to cope with the difficult tasks of cultural reconstruction. It is not our place here to criticise this or that measure; in order to evaluate these radical reforms properly one would have not only to examine the plans but also their application in practice and the results they achieved.

We are, however, particularly interested in the national element in the general system of communist education which finds articulate expression in the language used.

● 195 871 In the original Ukrainian Socialist Republic the Ukrainian language was to have priority as the official language; 'this point of view was approved even in 1920 after the Revolution and steps were taken to make Ukrainian the vehicle of instruction throughout the schools where this had not already been done. Ukrainian nationalists were quick to seize this opportunity of promoting their native tongue and to aim at positive results at least in this province. But the growth in national consciousness among the broad masses of workmen and peasants due to the intensified use of the Ukrainian language began to make communist leading circles in the country uneasy. Russian was introduced as a second official language, by which the authorities hoped to put a brake on nationalism and to prevent Ukrainian influences from becoming too strong. Thus there were throughout Ukraine schools taught in two, and even three languages in order that Russian and Jewish minorities might enjoy their own rights. This preference shown to national minorities greatly handicapped the proper official language, a fact that was the more striking the higher the level of school investigated. The position of Ukrainian was most precarious at the universities,

as was frankly admitted by the official representatives at the People's Commissariat for education. The shortage of teachers able to lecture in Ukrainian, the lack of Ukrainian text-books and the poor development of Ukrainian scientific terminology were quoted as excuses; sometimes also the hostile attitude of some of the professors.

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The same thing could be noticed in the attendance of schools by pupils of different nationality. In all vocational schools there were 53,1 % Ukrainians, 20 % Russians, and 22,5 % Jews while the population was composed as follows: 80 % Ukrainians, 9,2 % Russians, and 5,4 % Jews. Circumstances were even less favorable to the Ukrainians at the universities where the percentage of Ukrainian students sank in proportion as Jewish and Russian quotas increased. The "purges" that were conducted at universities from time to time carried off mainly Ukrainians, thereby still further reducing the proportion of students from the nation to which the majority of the population belonged.

The provinces in Eastern Galicia and Bucovina which had fallen to Austria were incorporated in the general educational system in that country. The efforts of the Ukrainian population in the second half of the 19th century were confined to preserving the national character of the schools. In this they only partially succeeded, as the Poles were hostile to these efforts. To be able to educate their young people along national lines, the Ukrainians founded a series of private schools about the turn of the century which were maintained by public Ukrainian contributions. At the same time a severe struggle arose round Lviv university, which the Polish authorities in Galicia had transformed from an originally German and then Ukrainian-Polish university to an almost entirely Polish center of education. Circumstances were more favorable in Bucovina where the Ukrainians were tolerated by the Germans to satisfy their national claims.

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In consequence of the unhappy outcome of the war between Poland and Ukraine (1919), Eastern Galicia was incorporated in the Polish state, whereby the position of the Ukrainians became much worse than it had been under Austria. According to